

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-18

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DRAFTED BY AF/E:WBCOOTE:CRJ

APPROVED BY P:MR. SISCO

AF:AM . ULCAHY

S/S - MR. EALUM

NEA:SSOBER

----- 116182

P R 062245Z AUG 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 171544

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MASS ET US

SUBJECT: MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA

1. UNDER SECRETARY SISCO CALLED INAMB. KIFLEAUGUST 5 TO INFORM HIM OF USG APPROVAL OF IEG REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL DOLS 28 MILLION WORTH OF U.S. ARMS, INCLUDING TOW MISSILE SYSTEMS AND VULCAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS. HE ADDED THAT DOD, WITH WHOM HE AWARE IEG REPS ARE HAVING ONGOING TALKS, WAS MAKING SPECIAL EFFORT TO EXPEDITE DELIVERY OF ITEMS, INCLUDING IN SOME INSTANCES WITHDRAWING DESIRED EQUIPMENT FROM U.S. UNITS IN FIELD. IEG WOULD FIND DOD FORTHCOMING AND WILLING TO DO ALL POSSIBLE WITHIN LIMITS TO BE HELPFUL.

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2. SISCO STATED THAT EMBASSY MOGADISCIO HAS REPORTED CON-

TINUING ASSURANCES BY PRESIDENT SIAD AND OTHER HIGH-LEVEL SOMALI OFFICIALS THAT SOMALIS WILL NOT ATTACK ETHIOPIA. FACT THAT SIAD NOW PRESIDENT OF OAU LIKELY TO HAVE FAVORABLE EFFECT RE SOMALI WILLINGNESS TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT AGAINST NEIGHBORS. NEVERTHELESS USG AWARE OF IEG'S CONCERN AT RECENT INCREASE IN SOMALI ARMS, AND FOR THIS REASON WE ARE RESPONDING FAVORABLY TO IEG REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE. IN SO DOING, WE HAVE STRETCHED TO LIMIT OF AUTHORIZATION WHICH ADMINISTRATION HAS, UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION, TO PROVIDE ARMS TO AFRICA.

3. ADDITIONALLY, SISCO WANTED AMBASSADOR TO BE AWARE THAT WE HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED REPORT THAT SAUDIS ARE WILLING TO DISCUSS WITH IEG ETHIOPIA'S NEED FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. WE HAVE ASKED OUR EMBASSY IN ADDIS TO CONVEY THIS INFO TO IEG, BUT KIFLE MAY ALSO WISH TO DO SO.

4. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR U.S. RESPONSE, KIFLE SAID HE WOULD COMMUNICATE DECISION TO IEG. HE THEN COMMENTED THAT GSDR HAD ALREADY MADE CRUCIAL DECISION TO ATTACK ETHIOPIA; ONLY QUESTION WAS TIMING. SOMALIS MIGHT WISH TO MOVE IN MORE QUICKLY IF THEY FELT POINT OF STABILIZATION IN ARSENALS OF TWO COUNTRIES WAS APPROACHING. ALL WEAPONS REQUESTED BY IEG WERE FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES, AND THEY WERE NEEDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IEG REMAINS CONCERNED OVER LONG LEAD-TIME IN DELIVERY OF SEVERAL OF ITEMS NEEDED NOW (E.G. RADAR 3 YEARS, TANKS 4 YEARS). FURTHERMORE, IEG DOES NOT YET KNOW WHEN IT WILL RECEIVE F5A AND F5E AIRCRAFT. IEG FONMIN HAS TALKED TO IRANIANS ABOUT F5E AIRCRAFT BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS. KIFLE REITERATED THAT IEG PACKAGE WAS AN INTEGRATED REQUEST AND THERE COULD BE PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES FOR PLANNERS IF MATERIAL RECEIVED IN PIECEMEAL FASHION. MOREOVER, DISPARITIES IN DELIVERY TIME COULD GIVE SOMALIS FURTHER REASON TO ATTACK SOONER.

5. AS FINAL POINT SISCO EXPRESSED STRONG USG CONCERN OVER CONTINUING DETENTION BY ELF OF FOUR TENNECO PERSONNEL AND HOPED IEG MIGHT AGREE TO RELEASE OF AT LEAST TWO CONFIDENTIAL

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OF THE ELF PRISONERS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED BY ELF IN ORDER GET NEGOTIATIONS FOR RELEASE OF HOSTAGES MOVING AGAIN. KIFLE NOTED THAT EVERYTHING IS BEING DONE TO SECURE SAFETY OF HOSTAGES. A MAJOR PROBLEM IN OBTAINING RELEASE OF HOSTAGES IS DIFFICULTY IN COMMUNICATING WITH PROPER ELF OFFICIALS SINCE THERE WERE SO MANY FACTIONS IN ELF. NEVERTHELESS IEG SHARES USG CONCERN AND AMBASSADOR WILL CONTINUE TO URGE HIS GOVT TO BE HELPFUL.

6. EMBASSY SHOULD FOLLOW-UP SISCO TALK WITH KIFLE BY CON-
VEYING FAVORABLE US DECISION ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE PACK-
AGE TO FONMIN OR OTHER APPROPRIATE HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIAL.
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